

## 2.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the built environment within the Downtown Development Plan area. More specifically, this chapter details the existing conditions within the Plan area in terms of historic resources, circulation and mobility, land use and zoning, and economic conditions.

## 2.2 AREA HISTORY AND HISTORIC RESOURCES

Throughout the first half of the 20th century, Frederick was a thriving working-class mining community with a population made up primarily of Southern and Eastern European immigrants. However, following the closure of the Town's coal mines in the 1950s, many residents moved out of the area to find new work. As a consequence, a substantial portion of the downtown businesses including the movie theater, boarding house, and a variety of bars and restaurants lost their customer base and had to close down.

Throughout the 1960's and 1970's Frederick's population remained stable and new development remained at a relative stand still. It wasn't until the early 1980's that new downtown development in the form of an auto-oriented suburban strip mall (*Figure 2-1*) brought new retail businesses back into the district. Additionally, the rapid expansion of the Denver metro area spurred new residential development in the areas surrounding the downtown and created a potential customer base for local-serving downtown retail. Downtown Frederick still serves as the civic heart of the community. The presence of the City Hall and Post Office are key uses that are important to the health of downtown. Every effort should be made to retain civic uses in the downtown.



*Figure 2-1: Clark Plaza*

In the late 1990's, interest in revitalizing downtown Frederick was sparked by the area's population growth, and led to the first reconstruction in over 40 years. Originally built in 1978 and redeveloped in 1998, the Miners Square Building serves as a model design for future downtown building development and currently houses a dance studio and a coffee shop in addition to other businesses.

Between 2000 and 2008, the Town grew from 2,467 to an estimated population of 8,081. The population of Frederick is likely to increase tenfold to 80,000 by 2035. Dacono will likely grow to 56,000 and Firestone will also grow to 38,000 for a combined population in the area to 174,000. This concentration of population will provide ideal conditions for the revitalization of the historic downtown core over the course of the next 20 years.

As the population continues to grow, downtown Frederick has an opportunity to capture a percentage share of the retail trade, thus repositioning downtown Frederick as the Town's speciality shopping and entertainment destination. An Open House event in February 2008 precedes the Downtown Development Plan in reorienting the downtown towards an economically and environmentally sustainable future.



*Figure 2-2: Original City Hall*

### HISTORIC STRUCTURES IN THE STUDY AREA

This plan does not seek to officially designate historic structures in the downtown area. Instead, it recognizes and encourages the preservation of buildings that have historic merit. Located on 5th Street between Main and Elm, the original City Hall building (*Figure 2-2*) is now a historic museum concerned with preserving Frederick's mining heritage. Other potentially historic structures include the old boarding house which is currently vacant. A future study by a historic preservation specialist will be necessary to determine the quality and quantity of historic structures within the plan area.

### HOW HISTORIC INFORMATION WILL BE USED

The review of existing historic resources lends important reference for new development in the Downtown Development Plan area. While the Plan in its entirety does not require strict application of traditional historic architectural styles, historic influences nonetheless shall be honored and retained where possible. In particular, "Main Street" storefronts, typified by large windows will be required. Land use and development recommendations within the Plan area will use and refer to the historic fabric of downtown Frederick. Consideration of the area's history is built into the planning process and is an important facet of land use planning and urban design throughout the Plan area. The Plan is subdivided into two planning districts, each with a special set of planning and design directions. The degree to which historic resources influence the design direction within these districts may vary; however, protection of existing noteworthy structures and respect for the Town's heritage is a theme that will guide new development.

## 2.3 EXISTING CIRCULATION AND MOBILITY

The primary gateway to downtown Frederick is noted by the intersection of two prominent streets: Colorado Boulevard and 5th Street. Colorado Boulevard delineates the western boundary of the Downtown Development Plan area, and is one of the main north/south transportation corridors for the Town. 5th Street has been the traditional east/west axis of the downtown for generations,

and runs through the heart of the downtown business district. Oak Street was the main north/south axis before the intersection of Colorado Boulevard and 5th Street and the bridge over the Tri-Town Drainage was constructed in 2002. Main Street was the primary entrance to the downtown area from SH52 before the 5th Street bridge was constructed in 2002 and the realigned intersection of Colorado Boulevard and SH52 was completed in 2008. The north end of the Downtown Development Plan area is delineated by 3rd Street which is primarily residential, and the east and south ends of the project boundary vary depending on location. However, the farthest eastern extent of the plan area is Frederick Way, and the farthest southern extent of the plan area is 7th Street.

The Comprehensive Plan and Downtown Development Plan both focus on increasing the opportunities for multiple travel modes including public transportation, pedestrian, and cycling options. Furthermore, the Downtown Development Plan suggests ways to calm the behavior of area traffic with the objective of creating a friendlier pedestrian environment.

## STREET NETWORK CHARACTERISTICS

The existing road configurations are as follows:

**Colorado Boulevard/Weld County Road (WCR) 13:** This two-lane arterial has a raised/landscaped median from SH52 to 1st Street, and center turn lane for the remainder of its length through Frederick. It forms the primary western boundary and north/south axis in the project area. It is designated as a 4-lane arterial on the Comprehensive Plan, and as a strategic regional arterial with a connection to E-470 to the south and extending north as WCR 13 through Weld County.

**5th Street:** This two-lane collector street with parallel parking on both sides acts as the primary east/west axis in the project area, and forms the spine of the downtown business district. In addition, the Town of Frederick police department is also located on 5th Street.

**Main Street:** This two-lane local street with parallel parking on both sides forms a secondary north/south axis in the project area. Prior to improvements on Colorado Boulevard (formerly WCR 13), Main Street historically played a more prominent role in the Town's hierarchy of streets, and there are plans for once again connecting Main Street to SH52 using a new alignment south of 8th Street.

**Frederick Way:** This two-lane collector street acts as the eastern-most boundary of the project area, and functions as another secondary north/south axis. South of 5th Street, Frederick Way has parallel parking on the west side of the road. North of 5th Street, Frederick Way has a rolled curb and parallel parking on both sides.

**Elm Street:** This two-lane local street with parallel parking on both sides connects 3rd Street to 7th Street in the plan area.

**Oak Street:** This two-lane local street with parallel parking on both sides connects 3rd Street to 7th Street in the plan area. The Post Office is located on Oak Street and this street was formerly the main north/south route through Frederick. It continues to function as a secondary north/south axis with connections to Evanston and Firestone to the north.

**Locust Street:** This two-lane local street with parallel parking on both sides connects 3rd Street to 7th Street in the plan area. In addition, the Town's Administrative Offices building is also located on Locust Street.

**Walnut Street:** This two-lane local street with parallel parking on both sides connects 3rd Street to 6th Street in the plan area.

**Maple Street:** This two-lane local street with parallel parking on both sides connects 3rd Street to 5th Street in the plan area.

**3rd Street:** This two-lane local street with parallel parking on both sides connects Main Street to Maple Street in the plan area.

**4th Street:** This two-lane local street with parallel parking on both sides connects Main Street to Grant Street in the plan area.

**6th Street:** This two-lane local street with parallel parking on both sides connects Main Street to Walnut Street in the plan area.

**7th Street:** This two-lane local street with parallel parking on both sides connects Main Street to Locust Street in the plan area.

Please refer to Chapter 5 for a complete discussion of study area mobility issues.

## PROJECT AREA TRANSIT ACCESS

Per the Weld County website, “the Weld County Transportation System has limited resources to provide services to elderly, disabled, low income persons, and the general public. Services are provided to Health Care facilities, Weld County internal programs, Social Services, Shopping and Recreation.”

In addition, there is a Park and Ride facility located near the intersection of State Highway 52 and Interstate Highway 25.



## 2.4 EXISTING ZONING AND LAND USE

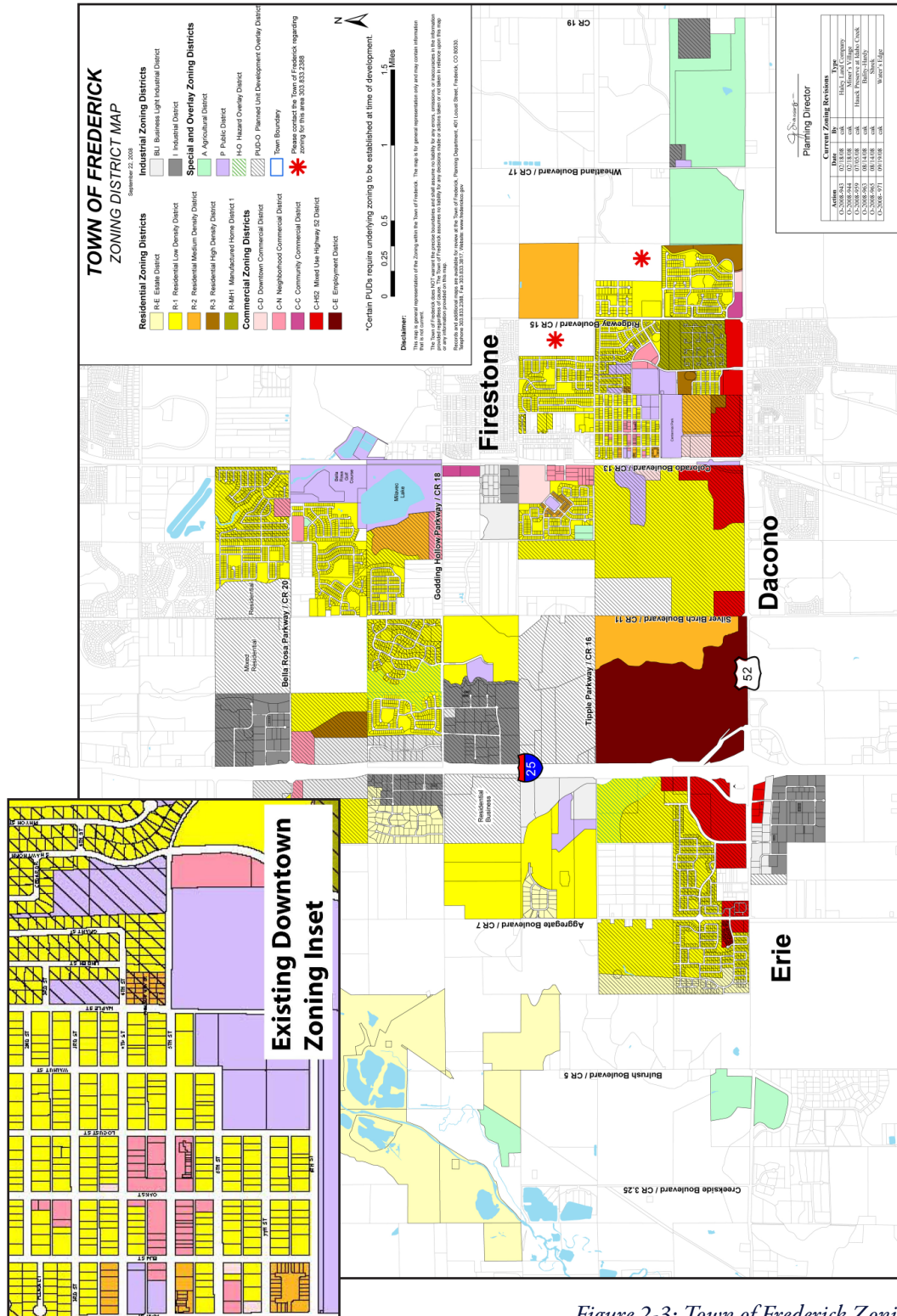


Figure 2-3: Town of Frederick Zoning

In the Comprehensive Plan, the majority of the Downtown Development Plan area is designated Downtown Commercial. The most prevalent zoning district in the Plan area (*Figure 2-3*) is Neighborhood Commercial (C-N). This zoning district allows for an assortment of retail shops, mixed-use civic uses, art galleries, restaurants, and some conditionally permitted uses such as bars, theaters, bed & breakfasts, automobile-oriented services, etc. Oddly, only three of the parcels zoned as “Downtown Commercial District” (C-D) are located within the boundary of the Downtown Development Plan.

Situated immediately west of the commercial core on 5th Street is an area zoned for Public use (P). This district allows for a variety of public facilities, parks, limited indoor/outdoor recreation, public schools, and some conditionally permitted uses such as private schools, hospitals, and recycling facilities. The remaining downtown zoning districts consist of a pocket of Medium-Density Residential (R-2) on 5th Street, and Low-Density Residential on the other streets in the downtown area. The Medium-Density Residential (R-2) zoning district allows up to 10 residential units per acre, and the Low-Density Residential zoning district allows up to 5 residential units per acre.

A primary objective of the Downtown Development Plan is to focus pedestrian-oriented retail and entertainment uses in the downtown core and minimize the amount of auto-oriented uses (*Figure 2-4*). Allowing residential uses to mix above offices and select retail will form a traditional downtown environment where living, working, shopping, and entertainment all coexist together. Additionally, it is just as important to provide incentives to existing auto-oriented uses to relocate to a more suitable area of the Town.



*Figure 2-4: Drive-thru in downtown Frederick*

## 2.5 EXISTING ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

In the fall of 2008 The Natelson Dale Group conducted an economic scan for the Town of Frederick. As part of the scan, Frederick was compared with three other downtowns: Louisville, Longmont, and Niwot. In addition, general downtown development patterns were observed in Lafayette, Boulder, and Ft. Collins. The following is a summary of the existing economic conditions that will influence the type and quantity of new and redevelopment activity in the Downtown Development Plan area.

### OVERVIEW OF REGIONAL ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

Existing market conditions in the region include the following highlights:

- Frederick (*Figure 2-5*) was the smallest of the analyzed downtowns with 42 storefronts and only 13 retail tenants.
- Frederick's 2 and 5-mile populations are substantially smaller than the other analyzed downtowns. In addition, these trade areas have the lowest residential income levels when compared with the other three downtowns.
- Due to the limited base of existing retail development in Frederick, Frederick's 2-mile trade area captures only 40% of its resident demand, and the 5-mile trade area captures only 35% of its resident demand.



*Figure 2-5: Downtown Frederick*

- Upon Town build out around 2035 with a total estimated population of 80,000, the downtown can expect to capture 5-15% of Town-wide retail development for an estimated total of 135,000 to 405,000 square feet of retail by 2030.

## OVERVIEW OF DOWNTOWN MARKET CONDITIONS

Market conditions in the downtown area include the following highlights:

- The Most significant “gaps” in downtown Frederick’s retail tenant mix are: apparel stores, nicer restaurants, home décor, and other specialty stores. In addition, the downtown lacks an entertainment anchor.
- The following list provides a general description of the types of land uses that are likely to thrive in a vibrant downtown environment: independent stores and restaurants (*Figure 2-6*), local service businesses, entertainment/recreation facilities, businesses that combine shopping/services with entertainment or learning, businesses that support self-improvement, community-based organizations, offices for “edgy” or creative businesses, art galleries and studios, and housing that caters to young professionals.
- The recommended development approach for downtown Frederick includes the following: PHASE downtown growth so that it matches the Town’s overall growth. CONCENTRATE growth in the core downtown area. STRATEGICALLY aim downtown marketing efforts at both developers and consumers. BALANCE downtown land uses via the creation of a) a more affluent young professional neighborhood population, and b) a larger daytime worker population. Finally, a HOLISTIC approach to downtown revitalization is necessary because downtown Frederick’s success depends on the success of the overall Town. Therefore, downtown development must be supported by (a) Town-wide policies that enhance the overall attractiveness of Frederick to higher income households and creative businesses/workers, and (b) a commitment to keeping and improving the major civic facilities in the downtown.



*Figure 2-6: D'Agostino's Restaurant*